



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

SOME ENGLISH CONDITIONS SURROUNDING THE SETTLEMENT OF VIRGINIA

To Americans the settlement of Jamestown presents itself as something unique, the birth of the nation, the first scene in the drama of American history. Looked at from the European side, however, it was but a single occurrence connected with a long line of preceding events and surrounded by a group of others with which it had mutual relations. Under the conditions existing in England at the beginning of the seventeenth century the establishment of the Virginia colony was the natural next step to take, and its form reflected the group of influences active there. In these times of reminiscence it may be of interest to examine more closely some of the steps that led up to the formation of the Virginia Company and some of the contemporary circumstances under which the settlement was made.

England came late into the colonizing movement. The example of two great colonial empires had long been before her. When the settlement of 1607 took place, more than a century had passed since the nearly contemporary voyages of Vasco da Gama in 1497 and of Columbus in 1492 had established the dominion of Portugal and of Spain respectively in the East and the West Indies. In the years immediately succeeding 1497 the Portuguese government, in a wonderful series of naval and trading expeditions, extended its dominion along the coasts of the Indian Ocean far beyond what would have seemed inherently possible for so small a nation. A line of able commanders not only successfully fought Indian, Arab, and Turkish fleets and the armies of petty Indian rajahs and island chieftains, but carried out a policy of seizing and holding the strategical military and commercial ports that soon gave them virtual command of all the Eastern seas. By 1520 the east coast of Africa, the land at the outlet of the Persian Gulf, the west coast of India, the island of Ceylon, Java, and the Spice Islands were lined by a scattered series of Portuguese fortified stations, and most of the princes of these regions had been forced to accept dependent alliances with the king of Portugal. From Quiloa and Mombassa on the African coast, through Ormuz, Diu, Goa, and Calicut, to Malacca and the Spice Islands, no vessel could trade without a

Portuguese pass, no coast ruler could make a treaty antagonistic to Portugal, and all the most profitable commerce was in her hands. A Portuguese viceroy ruled at Goa, and two governors with stations at Mozambique in the west and Malacca in the east were given the oversight of the outlying parts of these 15,000 miles of coast dominion. Every year a fleet averaging twenty sail passed around the Cape of Good Hope between Portugal and her eastern dominions, its great galleons, caravels, and carracks loaded with the most valuable articles of commerce. Lisbon became a great commercial centre and Portugal enjoyed a period of unwonted intellectual, economic, and international prominence. Her king along with his other titles called himself "Lord of the Conquest, Navigation, and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India."

The construction by Spain in the latest years of the fifteenth and the early years of the sixteenth century of a still more extended, more powerful, and more profitable empire in the West is an even more impressive if also more familiar story. By some such date as 1540 the *conquistadores* had explored and largely subjugated a great part of the island and continental regions of America south of what is now the United States. This dominion had been organized under the systematic administration of the Council of the Indies and the Casa de Contratacion in Spain and of two viceroyalties with a number of subordinate governments in America. Certain municipal institutions had been established and constant communication took place with the home government. The vast geographical extent of the Spanish dominions in the New World, with a Spanish-born population of perhaps 150,000 and native-born of possibly 5,000,000; the productivity of the silver and gold-mines, unexampled before in human history; the size of the fleets carrying between Spain and the Indies emigrants, military and civil officials, troops, bullion, European and American goods, and all the interchange of two parts of an advanced empire; the reaction of these things on the importance of the mother-country in Europe—all these, like the East-Indian empire of Portugal, had grown practically to maturity by the middle of the sixteenth century, long before England had established her first colony.

We know that the existence of these imposing political structures exercised a powerful influence on the thought of Englishmen. It was not merely that they had a natural human interest in the newly-discovered lands, with their savage men, new animal and vegetable productions, and peculiarities of climate and physical conformation; nor was it merely that the mystery, the glamor, and the romance of the distant and the unknown touched poetic imaginations amongst

them; but it was true that many Englishmen of influence had a vivid realization that two nations of Europe, one far smaller, the other not inordinately larger than England, had obtained a great inheritance in the East and the West that England might have had, might even yet rival. The very first reference to the New World in English general literature is an expression of regret and vexation on that account:

O what thyng a had be than
Yf that they that be englyshe men
Myght have ben the furst of all
That there shulde have take possessyon
And made furst buyldynge and habytacion
A memory perpetuall.
And also what an honorable thyng
Bothe to the realme and to the kynge
To have had his domynyons extendynge
There into so farre a grounde.¹

An early historian makes one party in the council of Henry VIII., as early as 1511, say, "The Indies are discover'd, and vast treasure brought from thence every day. Let us therefore bend our endeavours thitherwards; and if the Spanish and Portuguese suffer us not to join with them, there will be yet region enough for all to enjoy."² The well-known memorial sent by Robert Thorne, an English merchant resident in Seville, to Henry VIII. in 1527, after speaking of the islands and territories belonging to the kings of Spain and Portugal, declares that in some of the earlier English expeditions, "if the marriners would have been ruled, and folowed their pilot's mind the lands of the West Indies from whence all the gold commeth had beene ours", and that even yet England might find lands under the equator no less rich in gold and spicery and no less profitable to her than theirs were to the kings of Spain and Portugal.³ Richard Eden in the dedication of his *Treatyse of the New India*, published in 1553, again expresses regret that the faint-heartedness of the early English navigators prevented its coming to pass that the rich Peruvian treasury of the Spanish king at Seville was not in the Tower of London.⁴ In his *Decades of the New World*, published two years later, he refrains, naturally enough, from such a pious wish, as his book is dedicated

¹ *An Interlude of the Four Elements*, written probably in 1519; printed in E. Arber, *First Three English Books on America*, pp. xx-xxi.

² Lord Herbert of Cherbury, *History of Henry VIII.*, under the year 1511.

³ Hakluyt, II. 177.

⁴ E. Arber, *First Three English Books on America*, p. 6.

to Philip of Spain, now king also of England, but he does go so far as to say in his "Preface to the Reader":

Besyde the portion of lande perteynyng to the Spanyardes and beside that which pertaineth to the Portugales, there yet remayneth an other portion of that mayne lande reachyng towards the northeast, thought to be as large as the other, and not yet knowen but only by the sea coastes, neyther inhabyted by any Christian men.

Then still more exactly indicating the very region which was destined long afterward to become Virginia and New England, he declares that it is a reproach to the English race that they who are the nearest people in Europe to that land have not attempted to christianize or occupy it, nor "to doo for owr partes as the Spaniardes have doone for theyrs, and not ever lyke sheepe to haunte one trade, and to doo nothyng woorthy memorie amonge men or thankes before god".¹

Similarly through the growing familiarity of the Englishmen with the Indies during the reign of Elizabeth runs the thought that England also should have an Indian empire. The residence of English merchants and the experience of travellers in Spanish and Portuguese cities, their home correspondence, and their translations of Spanish works on the Indies;² the productions of pamphleteers and writers of travels, culminating in the work of Hakluyt in 1589; the unwelcome visits of English adventurers to the Indies; the capture by Drake in 1587 and 1592 of the *San Felipe* and the *Madre de Dios*, the two great Portuguese carracks on their way home from the East Indies; the minute description of the Portuguese East Indies by Linschoten in his work published in England in 1598; the wide experience and thoughtful observation of many English statesmen and ambassadors—all these strengthened "imperialist" sentiment in England. Men of visionary temperament, like Sidney, Raleigh, Drake, Captain John Smith, Sir Thomas Smythe, and many humbler names among London merchants or restless adventurers, felt their imaginations stirred by the thought of distant dominions of such extent, interest, and value to the European powers that ruled them. It is not to be believed that in a period of strong national self-consciousness and increasing power, when ambition for distant possessions had been growing through more than one generation, a vigorous and effective effort to establish some such colony as Virginia could have been long delayed.

Projects indeed were early formed and colonists sent out, but their history is a record of failure. A desire for the possession

¹ Arber, p. 55.

² Underhill, *Spanish Literature in the England of the Tudors*, chap. 5.

of a colonial empire and enthusiasm for the plantation of colonies are not enough; a practicable plan must be found.

English exploitation of America was begun on mistaken and impracticable lines. A large proportion of the expeditions that were sent from England to America in the last two decades of the sixteenth century were sent out by single individuals or small groups of individuals. The first expedition which carried men intended as settlers, that of Sir Humphrey Gilbert in 1578, was a private venture of his own, with the aid of a few friends, and that on which he lost his life five years afterward was on scarcely a broader basis. The contemporary annalist, Camden, speaking of Gilbert's failure and death, says, "learning too late himself, and teaching others, that it is a difficulter thing to carry over Colonies into remote Countreys upon private mens Purses, than he and others in an erroneous Credulity had persuaded themselves, to their own Cost and Detriment".¹ Or as some one a few years later says, "Private purces are cowlde compfortes to adventurers, and have ever ben fownde fatal to all interprises hitherto undertaken by the English, by reason of delaies, jeloces and unwillingnes to backe that project which succeeded not at the first attempt."² The multiplicity and extent of costs involved in procuring and fitting out vessels, in providing military equipment and all other supplies for mariners and colonists, and in supporting employees and settlers; the long waiting for any returns; the slight development of instruments of credit—these made demands beyond the means of any individual gentleman or group of gentlemen, burdened as they already were by the living expenses of their rank. The efforts of the Gilberts, the Raleighs, and the Sidneys were along mistaken and hopeless lines. Their efforts were more useful as a warning than as an example. There is no instance of a successful settlement in America carried out by private persons till well toward the middle of the seventeenth century. Until the day when settlers for religious or economic reasons went out at their own cost, the only hope of meeting the expenses incident to founding a colony was either to draw on the resources of the whole community through the government, or to meet them by the combined means and the organized credit and effort of the merchant class. At the close of the sixteenth century the English government was not in a position financially or politically to furnish the funds for colonization, so the only remaining practical method was

¹ *History of Queen Elizabeth*, p. 287.

² "Reasons or Motives for the Raising of a Publique Stocke," sect. 5. Printed in Brown, *Genesis of the United States*, I. 37.

the formation of a trading company, with its much more extended resources and its corporate life. The £40,000 which Raleigh spent on the six or eight expeditions he sent out nearly ruined him and his friends, while the East India Company spent more than £60,000 on its first voyage to the East alone.

The true line of descent of the plan for the successful settlement of Virginia is through the early trading companies of the Old World, not through the early failures in the New. In fact the whole advance of English discovery, commerce, and colonization in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was due not to individuals but to the efforts of corporate bodies. The development of such companies is a familiar story. It began almost an even half-century before the settlement of Jamestown. In 1553 a group of London merchants sent out an expedition to the north-east to seek a new outlet for trade. As a result a line of connection was formed with Moscow in the centre of Russia, and in 1555 a charter was given to the merchants engaged in the trade, forming them into the body that had a long and influential history under the familiar name of the Muscovy Company. "Muscovy House", their hall, was long the customary meeting-place for adventurers interested in new trading movements. Twenty-five years later the merchants who were engaged in the trade with Scandinavia and the lands to the east of the Baltic Sea secured a charter guaranteeing to them the monopoly of English commerce there, and became known as the Baltic or Eastland Company. From a time early in the century other merchants had been interested in trade with Venice and the eastern Mediterranean possessions of Venice. Now they proceeded to develop a trade with the possessions of Turkey, in 1581 were chartered as the Levant or Turkey Company, and shortly afterward absorbed the smaller company trading to the northern Mediterranean.

In the meantime a Barbary or Morocco Company had been formed. Then, as an Elizabethan chronicler says, "The searching and unsatisfied spirits of the English, to the great glorie of our nation, could not be contained within the banckes of the Mediterranean or Levant seas, but that they passed far towards both the articke and anarticke Poles, enlarging their trade into the West and East Indies".¹ English trade with the west coast of Africa was resented by the Portuguese, and in 1561 Queen Elizabeth was induced to issue the following proclamation:

Although we know no reasonable cause why our subjects may not saile into any country or province subject to our good brother, being in

¹ John Speed, *Chronicle*, II. 852.

amytye with us, paying such tributes and droytes as may belong to their traffique, yet at the instant request of the said king, made to us by his ambassador, we be pleased for this tyme to admonish all manner our subjects to forbear anie entry by navigation into any said ports of Ethiopia in which the said king hath presently dominion and tribute.¹

Many changes occurred in the next twenty-five years, and when all the possessions of the Portuguese had come into the hands of the king of Spain and war had broken out between them and the queen, there was no longer any reason for such self-restraint, so that in 1588 the first Guinea or African Company was chartered. In 1589 a petition was laid before Lord Treasurer Burleigh asking for the queen's authorization to a group of adventurers to establish a trade in the Far East, on the ground that "the Portugales of long tyme have traded the East Indies and the countries to them adjoyning to the great benefytte and enriching of themselves and their countrie . . . and the tyme doth now offer greater occazion for the attempting of trade in those countries than at any tyme heretofore yt hath done."² This project resulted in the Raymond and Lancaster expedition to India in 1591 and ultimately in the establishment in 1600 of the East India Company, the most ambitious of all the chartered companies of the period.

In the same year with this petition, however, that is to say 1589, a memorial of even greater boldness, breadth of view, and interest was submitted to the queen. It is headed, "A Discourse of the Commoditie of the taking of the Straight of Magellan."³ It is based on the anticipated peril to all Europe arising from the possession of both the West and the East Indies by the king of Spain and his shutting other nations entirely out from both their products and their trade. It proposes that the narrowest part of the Strait of Magellan be occupied and fortified by the English, calmly suggesting that "Clarke the pyrott" may be sent there on promise of pardon, or rather, may "go there as of him selfe and not with the countenance of the English state", and take some cannon and a man skilled in fortification. If later a few good English soldiers are placed there, no doubt "they will soon make subject to them all the golden mines of Peru and all the coste and tract of that firm of America." As additions to the soldiers and the native population may be sent "condemned Englishmen and women in whom there may be found hope of amendment". Then the author contemplates, probably for the first time, an independent America. "But admitt that we could

¹ Dyson, *Proclamations*, No. 34.

² State Papers, East Indies, I., No. 8.

³ State Papers, Dom., Eliz., ccxxix, 97.

not enjoye the same longe, but that the Englishe there would aspire to government of themselves, yet were it better that it should be soe then that the Spaniardes should with the treasure of that countrie torment all the countries of Europe with warres." This and much more equally audacious and impracticable brought no response from the thrifty and cautious powers then in charge of the English government. And indeed such a project is to be looked upon rather as an indication of the expansive spirit of England than as a proposal anywhere within the realm of success.

Thus the century and the reign of Elizabeth closed without the possession by England of a foothold on the western continent. Yet the way was obvious. Six chartered commercial companies had divided most of the available Old World between them; next to be chartered was the Virginia Company. In fact the three next succeeding companies, the Guiana, the Newfoundland, and the Bermuda Companies, established in 1609, 1610, and 1612 respectively, all had their sphere of operation in America. The connection of the older companies with the Virginia Company was very close. More than one hundred members of the Virginia Company were already members of the East India Company. Sir Thomas Smythe was at the same time governor of both the Muscovy and the East India Companies, a member of the Levant Company, and treasurer of the Virginia Company. John Eldred, a director, and Sir William Romney, a governor of the East India Company, were members of the first council of Virginia. Richard Staper, who is described on his tombstone in St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, as "the cheefest actor in the discoverie of the trades of Turkey and East India", was much interested in the Virginia project, but died in June, 1608, just too soon to have his name inscribed with the others on the second charter. The same connection existed in the case of Sir Edwin Sandys, Sir Thomas Roe, and many others. There was also a distinct lapping over in time. The second charter of the Virginia Company was signed on the twenty-third and the second charter of the East India Company on the thirty-first of May, 1609. The vessels for the third voyage to India and those for the first voyage to Virginia were both loading at the wharves of London at the same time; and the two ships of one of the expeditions of the Muscovy Company had returned to Gravesend but three months before the first Virginian fleet left it.

Close however as was the connection of the Virginia Company with preceding trading companies, in many ways the closest analogy with its action and its nearest congener among the movements of the time is to be found in the plantation of Ireland then in progress.

An English colony had been established in Ireland in the twelfth century, and additional settlers had come from England and Wales during the thirteenth and the earliest years of the fourteenth century, but after that time immigration had with small exceptions come to an end.¹ This "first colonization" had however been largely absorbed into the native population or had returned to England, and the end of the fifteenth century had seen the English occupation and domination in Ireland reduced to its lowest limits. Within the sixteenth and the early seventeenth century, however, a great reaction took place, first in the government, which became more vigorous and extended its power more widely in the island; then in the population, into which with great labor an English and Scottish element was injected. The colonization of Ireland with Britons may indeed be looked on as largely a part of the political policy of the government. The maintenance of an armed body in Ireland was an expensive necessity; if this could be provided by the military services exacted from a body of English settlers, money would be saved and the end more effectively reached. Again, the evident failure to induce the native population or the old English element to abandon Catholicism made it highly desirable for political reasons to introduce a Protestant element from the outside. Since the only conception of orderly government which English statesmen of the time could form was the system already in existence in England, with its county and parish administration, its justices of the peace, grand and petty juries, and town corporations; and since these could only be counted on to act in accordance with the desires of the administration if they were made up of Englishmen and Protestants, this requirement made a still further need for settlers. Therefore the government was more than ready to respond to the enterprise, the adventurous spirit, and the acquisitiveness of the times; and as a matter of fact an extensive colonization by English and Scots took place nearly if not quite contemporary with the earliest settlement of America.

There was much that was alike in the two movements. The simultaneity of dates is striking. It is true that in Ireland the process began sooner, but these first efforts were hardly more successful than the tentative sixteenth-century settlements in America. In 1566 a "plantation" was begun in Leix and Offaly in the centre of Ireland in the lands of the O'Mores and O'Conors, far earlier than any definite project of English settlement in America was mooted, unless it were Stukely's plan for the settlement of Florida in 1563 and the

¹ Bonn, *Die Englische Kolonisation in Irland*, I. 83-89; *English Historical Review*, October, 1906, p. 774.

suggestions for colonization included in Gilbert's pamphlets of 1565. But this colonization in Ireland went forward very haltingly, and it was not till the very close of the century that the few English settlers had permanently taken the place of the natives.¹ There was also a series of attempts at settlements in the southwestern counties in 1569 and in the northeast in 1567, 1570, and 1573, but the native Irish were too strong and the intruding elements too weak to gain success as settlers.² The most direct parallel to the efforts at American settlement by Gilbert and Raleigh between 1578 and 1588 is to be found in the plantation of Munster, which was begun in 1584. Extensive grants were at that time made to Raleigh, Spenser, and other courtiers, and detailed conditions were published by which these and other broad lands confiscated from the natives were to be occupied by English adventurers and their tenants. But there were many difficulties, the colonization proceeded slowly; in 1592 only two hundred and forty-five English families could be found actually settled there; in 1598 even these were temporarily swept away in the storm of Tyrone's rebellion, and in 1602 Raleigh disposed of his grant in disgust. Munster was provided with a certain number of new settlers, but they were almost lost among the surviving native population.

The English colonization of Ireland that really succeeded, like the successful colonization of Virginia, occurred in the early years of the seventeenth century. In the fall of 1605 Sir Arthur Chichester, Lord Deputy, was formulating the first plans for an extensive settlement of the lately forfeited lands in Ulster; and at the same time Gates, Somers, and others were drawing up the petition which led to the grant of the first charter of the Virginia Company; Weymouth had just returned from New England; and the populace of London was laughing at the jests on the Virginia voyagers, on Captain Seagull and the Scotchmen in *Eastward Hoe*. The year 1606 saw the first settlement of County Down and the continued occupation of Antrim by Scotchmen,³ and the departure from London on December 30 of the first colonists of Virginia. In the years immediately following, while successive expeditions were taking out the small and unfortunate groups of early victims to the diseases, dissensions, and massacres of Virginia, steps were being taken for the plantation of Ulster on a large scale. In May, 1611, the first settlers of Ulster proper began to arrive and take up their lands. Emigration now went on to both countries alike. Ulster having

¹ Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, I. 385, etc.; Bonn, *Kolonisation*, 280-287.

² Bagwell, II., chaps. xxv.-xxxI.

³ George Hill, *The Macdonnells of Antrim*, 229, etc.; *The Montgomery Manuscripts*, 54, etc.

been at least partially populated, new plantations were carried out in Wexford, Longford, Leitrim, and Westmeath, and several parts of the old Munster settlement were recolonized, while to Virginia were added New England, Maryland, the Bermuda Islands, and other American settlements.

A bond between Virginia and Ireland is also to be found in the men who had a common interest in both. The Carews, Grenvilles, Courtenays, and Chichesters who planned a great colonizing expedition from Somerset and Devon into Ireland in 1569 were the same men who were interested in the earliest attempts to colonize America. Sir Humphrey Gilbert had been a captain in Ireland in 1566 before he presented to the queen his first address advocating colonization in America; he returned to Ireland in 1567 in an unsuccessful attempt, along with Sir Henry Sidney, to make a settlement on Lough Foyle; some years later he went again to Ireland in connection with a similar scheme for a settlement in Munster, and remained in military service in that province as colonel in the final campaign of the Desmond rising. All this occurred before he made his first voyage to America in 1578, and he was still again in Ireland between his return and his departure on his last and fatal voyage of 1583.¹

Raleigh's career had begun in Ireland, and when he abandoned his rights in Virginia in 1589 it was to return with new interest to the effort for the development of his estates in Cork and Waterford. Two years afterward, when this like the rest of the Munster plantations failed, it was again to an American project, the exploration of Guiana, that he turned. Sir John Popham took a deep interest both in the plantation of Munster and in that of Virginia. Sir Francis Bacon was similarly interested in both countries, submitting plans for the settlement of Ireland, and as solicitor-general helping to draw up the charter of 1609 for Virginia. He was also a member of the royal council for Virginia. His valuation of the settlement of Ireland was the higher of the two. In his *Considerations touching the Plantation in Ireland*, presented to King James on New Year's day, 1609, he treats the colonization of Virginia as a somewhat visionary scheme, that of Ireland as a serious reality, the former being "an enterprise in my opinion differing as much from this as Amadis de Gaul differs from Caesar's Commentaries". At the same time he goes on to recommend the establishment of two councils for the Irish plantation, one to sit in London, the other in Ireland, similar to the two councils for Virginia; and long afterward he speaks of the plantations of Ireland and of Virginia as two of the greatest glories of King James's reign.²

¹ *Dictionary of National Biography*, article on Gilbert.

² Spedding, *Lord Bacon's Letters and Life*, IV. 123; VII. 175.

Other similarities existed. In the colonization of Ireland as of America, organized and chartered companies are not unknown. In 1611 the East India Company purchased certain lands near Duncaniel on the southern coast of County Cork, where they erected iron-works, built dwellings for 300 workmen, cut down woods, established a ship-yard, and within the next two years spent £7,000 and built two vessels of 500 and 400 tons.¹ In 1609, after prolonged negotiation between the Privy Council and the officers of the city of London, an agreement was entered into by which the whole county of Derry in Ireland was handed over to the city, to be colonized under its control and to its profit. In order to carry out this work the "Honorable Society of the Governor and Assistants of London of the New Plantation in Ulster within the Realm of Ireland" was formed by the court of mayor and aldermen of the city, the Wardrobe in the Guildhall was set apart for its meeting-place, and a charter of incorporation granted it by the crown, May 29, 1613.² The society proceeded immediately to divide the land among the twelve city companies for sale and settlement, reserving to itself only the possession of the cities of Londonderry and Coleraine, their contiguous lands, and the woods, ferries, and fisheries.³ But this was scarcely a genuine trading company; it existed, indeed still exists, only as an intermediary between the government and the settlers. The distant commerce that lay at the basis of the other companies which carried out schemes of colonization had no place in the relations between England and Ireland, and such companies could therefore hold here hardly any appreciable place.

On the other hand, both in Ireland and in Virginia we hear much of groups or combinations of men or "consortships", formed to carry out independent settlements. It was an associated group of twenty-seven volunteers from the southwestern counties of England, under the headship of Sir Peter Carew, who in 1569 petitioned the queen for a grant of the southwestern counties of Ireland. During the colonization of Munster in 1586, we hear of "nineteen men who desire in one consort with the writer, Henry Ughtred, to plant the counties of Connollo and Kerry"; of the gentlemen of one association of Cheshire, Lancashire, Somerset, and Dorset; and of another of Hampshire and Devon.⁴ In connection with the plantation of Ulster "consorts of undertakers" are authorized, and the name of

¹ *Cal. St. Papers, Ireland, 1611-1614*, pp. 170, 369, 381.

² *A Concise View of the Origin . . . of the Governor and Assistants . . . commonly called the Irish Society* (London, 1822); *Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Irish Society, May 4, 1891*.

³ *Concise View*, p. 38.

⁴ *Cal. St. Papers, Ireland, 1586-1588*, pp. 51, 242, 243.

an individual, when it appears, is often used to represent such a group.¹ The corresponding process in Virginia is described as follows in the *Records of the Virginia Company*:

The Collony beinge thus weake and the Treasury utterly exhaust, Itt pleased divers Lords, Knights, gentlemen and Cittizens (greived to see this great Action fall to nothinge) to take the matter a new in hand and at their pryvate charges (joyninge themselvs into societies) to sett upp divers particularr Plantacions.²

From this time forward a prominent part in the work of settlement in Virginia was taken by "Captain Samuel Argall and his associates", "Hamor and his associates", "Martin and his associates", "the Society of Smythe's Hundred", "the Society of Martin's Hundred", "Captain John Bargrave and his associates", "William Tracy and his associates", "the company of John Smith of Nibley", and a number of other groups of adventurers.³ Indeed, the agreement made with the Virginia Company under which the Pilgrims from Leyden sought the New World was a typical instance of these arrangements. In the fall of 1617 two representatives of this body came to London and entered into communication with the company. After long negotiations, the final grant under which the momentous voyage of the *Mayflower* was made was that to "John Pierce and his associates, their heirs and assignes", completed February 12, 1620.⁴

Some lesser analogies between the settlement of Ireland and of Virginia are noticeable. The statute *quia emptores* was suspended for the settlers in Ulster, and new manors and subtenancies could be created, as was true for Virginia and the other American colonies;⁵ there were much the same privileges of export and import for a certain period of years free of duty;⁶ the local division called a "precinct", not apparently in use in England, but rather widely spread in the southern colonies of America, was used in a similar technical sense in the north of Ireland. There is the same complaint of the low character of many of the colonists. A Presbyterian minister who came to Ulster at the beginning of the settlement says:

From Scotland came many, and from England not a few; yet all of them, generally the scum of both nations, who for debt, and breaking,

¹ *Ibid.*, 1611-1614, pp. 315, 317; Commission of July, 1609; George Hill, *Summary Sketch of the Great Ulster Plantation*, p. 18, etc.

² *Records of the Virginia Company* (1906), I. 350.

³ *Ibid.*, 347, 404, 439, etc.; Kingsbury, *Introduction to Records*, p. 95; Brown, *First Republic in America*, 245, 249, 256, etc.

⁴ Brown, 252, 262, 271, 341, 387, etc.

⁵ *Articles concerning English and Scotch Undertakers*, sect. 11; Lord Belmore, *Two Ulster Manors*, p. 66.

⁶ *Articles*, etc., sects. 14, 15; *Articles between the King and the City of London*, sect. 15.

and fleeing from justice, or seeking shelter came hither, hoping to be without fear of man's justice in a land where there was nothing, or but little as yet, of the fear of God.¹

So Sir Thomas Dale describes those whom he took over with him in 1611 as "sutch disordered persons, so prophane, so riotous, so full of mutinie and treasonable intendments, as I am well to witness in a parcell of 300 which I brought with me, of which well may I say not many give testimonie beside their names that they are Christians, besides of sutch diseased and crased bodies".² Fortunately for both settlements we have reason to know that they contained also far better elements. There is the same tendency in both colonizations to introduce that compulsion in order to secure colonists to which men so readily turned in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³

Eventually the colonization of Ireland and of the American colonies became rival movements. This opposition had been felt by some from an early period. In 1605 Sir Arthlur Chichester, Lord Deputy of Ireland, wrote to the Earl of Salisbury of the absurd folly or wilful ignorance of those who run over the world in search of colonies in Virginia and Guiana whilst Ireland is lying waste and desolate.⁴ Later, in speaking of the proposed colonization of the north of Ireland, he says, "My heart is so well affected unto it that I had rather labour with my hands in the plantation of Ulster than dance or play in that of Virginia."⁵ At first the greater proximity of Ireland to Scotland and England was a point overwhelmingly in its favor; and in the second and third decades of the century, while hundreds were going to America, Irish immigration might count thousands. But there came a time when this proximity was looked upon as a disadvantage, and those emigrants who wanted to leave England at all wished to get entirely away from the mother-country. Puritans and Churchmen successively emigrated, but emigrated by preference to New England or Virginia, where the hostility of the dominant party in England had less effect than it might have in Ireland. Colonists for Ireland were never abundant. The plantations which were carried out just after that of Ulster, in the period from 1615 to 1630, and which it was intended to establish on the mountain slopes of the southeast and in the forests and bogs along the Shannon, had increasing difficulty in finding settlers.⁶ When Wentworth

¹ Rev. Andrew Stewart, in Hill, *Summary Sketch*, p. 18.

² Sir Thomas Dale to Lord Salisbury, August 17, 1611, in Brown, *Genesis of the United States*, I. 508.

³ Brown, *First Republic in America*, 248, 296, 346, 375, etc.

⁴ *Cal. St. Papers, Ireland, 1603-1606*, p. 326.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1608-1610, p. 520.

⁶ Bonn, *Kolonisation in Irland*, I. 353-357.

in the years immediately following 1630 formed plans for still another plantation, to be located in Ormond, Clare, and Connaught. It soon became evident that no English settlers were forthcoming, and Wentworth's political downfall only anticipated the certain failure of his colonizing policy.

In fact the settlement of Ireland as well as of America was necessarily limited by the amount of available population in England at the opening of the seventeenth century. A wide-spread opinion existed then that England was overpopulated, and this opinion is apparently still generally held. A tract printed in London in 1609, *A Good Speed to Virginia*, says:

God hath prospered us with the blessings of the wombe, and with the blessings of the breasts, the sword devoureth not abroad, neither is there any feare in our streetes at home; so that we are now for multitude as the thousands of Manasses and as the ten thousands of Ephraim . . . we are a great people and the lande is too narrow for us.¹

When James offered to allow his Scottish as well as his English subjects to take up lands in Ireland he explained that "There be no want of great numbers of the country people of England who with all gladness would transport themselves and their families to Ireland and plenish the whole bounds sufficiently with inhabitants."² The desirability of drawing off surplus population is frequently used as an argument for the plantation both of Ireland and of Virginia, and large numbers of emigrants are freely counted on. The Spanish ambassador Zuñiga learns in March, 1606, that the new company is planning to send 500 or 600 men to Virginia at once, and a few months later hears that the company will send 2,000 men; soon afterward 3,000 are talked of, then 1,500 more, with a plan of an early increase of the numbers to 12,000.³ In the colonization of Munster in 1586, similarly, 4,200 persons were planned for during the first year, 21,800 during the first seven years.⁴

Yet there is much to throw doubt on the correctness of this common impression of the existence of a large surplus of population in England. Overpopulation is entirely a relative term and can mean nothing more than either an excessive number of persons out of employment or a disproportionately rapid increase of population. It is very doubtful whether the latter of these conditions, at least, existed. Nothing is more untrustworthy than contemporary estimates of population. Dependent on the subjective attitude of the

¹ Reprinted in Brown, *Genesis of the United States*, I, 297.

² Hill, *Summary Sketch of the Great Ulster Plantation*.

³ Brown, *Genesis of the United States*, I, 46, 100, 102, 147.

⁴ *Cal. St. Papers, Ireland, 1586-1588*, p. 243.

person giving the estimate and his dwelling-place and opportunities for making a judgment, such a large movement as the increase or decrease of national population is quite beyond the capacities of an ordinary observer. No general statistics exist, so we are driven to indirect means of judgment. It is evident that great difficulty was found in obtaining settlers for the new colonies in both Ireland and Virginia. The plantation in Munster just referred to, instead of the anticipated 4,200 in the first year, had reached in five years only the number of 536. In 1592, at the end of seven years, instead of the 1,500 families required as a minimum by the conditions of settlement, there were but 245.¹ Of all the southern and central plantations of Ireland we hear the same story; the speculators who took the large tracts were forbidden to dispose of them to native Irish owners or tenants, but they were not successful, or at least were only partially and tardily successful in finding English or Scotch settlers, and thus largely failed to conform to the conditions of their grants. In Ulster, except in the shires nearest Scotland, the same was largely true. Every effort was made by the officials in formulating the terms of the contracts with the "undertakers" to secure British settlers and to exclude the Irish, but reports of 1619, 1622, 1624, and 1632 show great numbers of Irish tenants and a correspondingly small number of English and Scotch immigrants—not one-third of the number called for by the requirements.² The king was deeply disappointed, and from December, 1612, wrote a series of letters to the authorities in Ireland complaining bitterly of the failure to introduce any large body of English settlers in Derry and the other Ulster counties. Finally in 1635 the Irish Company of London was prosecuted in Star Chamber for having failed to fulfil the terms of its charter, and was proved not to have sent over as many settlers as required, and to have allowed the natives to outnumber the new-comers in many districts. It was thereupon condemned to pay a fine of £70,000 and to lose its lands.³ It was only into those counties which lay nearest to Scotland and which were in a specially favorable position in other respects that population flowed from the larger island in anything like an abundant stream; into all others it was a slender and slow-flowing current, till it practically ceased about 1630.

The settlers sent to Virginia were for a long time but few. A careful computation gives the following figures of those who left England for Virginia: 1606-1609, 300; 1609-1618, 1,500; 1618-

¹ Bonn, *Kolonisation*, I. 303-304.

² *Ibid.*, 334-342.

³ Gardiner, *History of England*, VIII. 59, 60.

1621, 3,570; so that in the fifteen years in which Virginia was the only American colony there were altogether but few more than 5,000 emigrants from England thither. The devices that were proposed to secure colonists, some of which indeed were adopted, suggest the same paucity in the supply. In 1611 Sir Thomas Dale, writing home to Lord Salisbury and appealing for a supply of 2,000 men, says that he has "conceived that if it will please his Majestie to banish hither all offenders condemned betwixt this and then to die, out of common Gaoles, and likewise so continue that grant for 3 yeres unto the Colonie, (and thus doth the Spaniard people his Indies,) it would be a readie way to furnish us with men."¹ The company, as a matter of fact, followed this policy to a limited extent through the whole period of its existence, but at this time convict emigration played but a small part compared with the extent to which it was later carried.² Yet the company repeatedly asked the mayor of London for vagrant boys and girls of the city to be sent to the colony, and in 1621 had a bill introduced into Parliament which would have required each parish in England to send at its own expense a certain number of its paupers to Virginia.³

The most destructive forces that were keeping down population in England at this time were three: warfare, death penalties inflicted by the law, and pestilence. It is true that England was in 1607 at peace, and destined to remain so for the next seventeen years, but peace was recent and had been preceded by a long warlike period. The generation that could be counted on for purposes of emigration was that which had been growing up in the past, and this could not be replaced immediately. It is true also, as frequent experience has shown, that national warfare does not necessarily deplete population. But the warfare of Elizabeth's time was particularly destructive to life. The small body of English troops which according to the treaty of 1585 England bound herself to keep up in the Netherlands was like a leak in one of the Dutch dikes. Badly selected, badly equipped, badly fed, the soldiers died in Holland and Zealand almost faster than they could be recruited in England.⁴ Those who were in France in 1591 and the succeeding years were the victims of an only slightly less fatality; those in Ireland perhaps of a greater. The naval expeditions were even more fatal than land campaigns. The sailors and soldiers on board the vessels returning from the

¹ Brown, *Genesis of the United States*, I. 506.

² J. D. Butler in *AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW*, II. 12-33.

³ *Records of the Virginia Company* (1906), I. 270, 431, 479, 489, 583, etc.

⁴ *Leycester Correspondence*, Camden Society, 167, 285, 338, 374, 384, 389, etc.; Motley, *United Netherlands*, I., chap. vi.

Armada fight "sickened one day and died the next" of ship-fever, until "many of the ships had hardly men enough to weigh their anchors." On the Portugal expedition of 1589 about 20,000 men embarked, less than 9,000 returned. Of 1,100 gentlemen volunteers on the expedition 700 died.¹ The subsequent expeditions of 1595, 1596, 1597, 1599, and 1601 were only somewhat less destructive to life. In 1598 Elizabeth ceased to pay the English troops in the service of the Netherlands, but they still remained there in the service of the States and were constantly recruited in England. Indeed the peace between England and Spain signed in 1604 made no change in their position except that the king made a barren and ineffective promise that he would try to persuade the Englishmen in the Netherlands service to return and would discourage others from going there.² English troops were kept in the cautionary towns in Holland and Zealand by the government till 1616, and English recruits were as a matter of fact obtained by the Dutch government. To these must be added those obtained for the arch-duke's service, in accordance with the permission given by the treaty. In 1610, the third year of the colonization of Virginia, there were 4,000 English troops in the Netherlands to be sent to the war in Cleves.³ Thus notwithstanding the generally peaceful policy of James, there was still a steady drain of English population for military purposes going on, as well as the necessity for recuperation from the larger losses of Elizabeth's time.

The losses by legal execution (although impossible, from the records now accessible, of statistical statement) can be roughly estimated, or at least can be discovered to have been considerable. In the years from 1608 to 1618, which cover the first decade of the settlement of Virginia, the court of jail-delivery of the county of Middlesex, which does not include the city and liberties of London, sent to execution 704 persons, an average of seventy a year. The number for that county for the whole of James's reign, so far as recorded, was 1,003, an average of about forty-five a year.⁴ In the county of Devon in the year 1598, a chance year, at the Lent assizes seventeen persons were hanged, at the autumn assizes eighteen, at the four quarter-sessions thirty-nine, making altogether seventy-four persons executed in the year. In the year 1596, forty persons were executed in the county of Somerset.⁵ To these are to be added 229

¹ State Papers, Dom., Eliz., cxxiii, No. 75; *Cal. St. Papers, Dom., 1581-1590*, p. 534; Lodge, *Illustrations of British History*, II. 355, etc.

² Winwood, *Memorials*, II. 27.

³ Gardiner, *History of England*, II. 100, 183; I. 219; Motley, *United Netherlands*, IV. 228.

⁴ Jeaffreson, *Middlesex County Records*, II. xvii-xx.

⁵ Hamilton, *Devonshire Quarter-Sessions*, 30-31.

Catholic recusants executed or allowed to die in prison under Elizabeth, and twenty-four under James;¹ and executions connected with special occurrences such as the rebellion of Essex and the Gunpowder Plot. When it is realized that, in each of the fifty-two shires of England and Wales, four times a year the justices of the peace and twice the justices of assize; and in each of the numerous chartered towns the corresponding judicial authorities were all busily applying a severe criminal code, it will be recognized that a check to overpopulation was being applied closely analogous to war and pestilence.

Yet there can be no doubt that the plague was the most destructive of all causes of the depletion of population at that time. At intervals approximating ten years this enemy, ill-understood, unprepared for, weakly opposed, invaded England and raised the death-rate for one or more years to many times its usual height. In 1593, in 1603, in the period from 1606 to 1610, and in 1625, London suffered losses that can be measured with considerable exactness; and during these and other years we have many glimpses of the ravages of the plague in other cities and in the rural parts of England. In the year 1593 there were 17,844 deaths in London and its immediate suburbs, of which 10,662 were attributed to the plague. Deaths from all other causes together were therefore but 7,182, and this was a larger number than usual. According to Stow, "There died in London and the liberties thereof, from the 23rd day of December 1602 to the 22nd day of December 1603, of all diseases 38,244, whereof of the plague 30,578."² The usual death-rate, according to these figures, was more than quadrupled; and there is other testimony to indicate that this is rather within than beyond the facts, another estimate, including some outlying districts, giving 42,945 deaths, whereof of the plague about 33,347.³ During the years from 1606 to 1610, the initial years of the settlement of Virginia, the plague was constantly active, though not nearly so destructive as in 1593 and 1603. The deaths specifically from the plague were as follows: 1606, 2,124; 1607, 2,352; 1608, 2,262; 1609, 4,240; and 1610, 1,803.⁴

The last serious visitation of the plague in London in this period was in 1625, in which year there were 54,265 deaths, of which 35,417 were attributed to the plague.⁵ In the middle of the summer the deaths from plague numbered more than 4,000 a week. In certain parishes where a maze of narrow streets, lanes, and alleys,

¹ Dodd-Tierney, *History of the Church of England*, III. 159-170; IV. 179-180.

² *Annales*, p. 857.

³ Creighton, *Epidemics in Britain*, I. 478.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 494.

⁵ *London's Remembrancer*.

lined with tenements, was filled with a crowded mass of the poorest of humanity, the deaths ran up to astonishing numbers; as in the case of St. Giles, Cripplegate, from which there were buried 3,988 persons during the year, 2,338 of them having died of the plague. The population of London and its suburbs in 1607 was probably about 225,000, the mortality in ordinary years being between 7,000 and 9,000, a proportion of about one-thirtieth, which was raised in more than one plague year to one-fifth or one-sixth.¹

The ravages of the plague in London were probably greater in degree than they were elsewhere, but not different in kind. Sometimes in entirely separate years, sometimes just preceding or succeeding the great London epidemics, we hear of the same desolating attacks on cities, towns, and villages scattered through all England. To estimate the effect of disease on population we must also add to the plague, technically so-called, other prevalent and fatal diseases, spotted fever, smallpox, flux, influenza, measles, and jail-fever or the "pining-sickness", all of which were exercising their full powers of destruction at this time.²

In view of all these conditions it is small wonder that early colonization could not command a very large body of emigrants from England. Indeed such material as it had to work with was provided rather by the displacement and disturbance of population in England than by its actual growth in numbers. This displacement was one of the most marked characteristics of the time. Economic and political causes had so far altered the equilibrium of large elements in the population that they were easily removable. Religious causes were to have the same effect in later times, indeed had already by the date of the settlement of Virginia begun their work. It was to this mobility of population that not only the possibility of colonization but the rapid growth of London was due. In an occasional favorable year the baptisms, which were practically the same in number as the births, exceeded the number of deaths, as in 1580 when the baptisms were 3,568, the deaths 2,873; but any slight access of the plague or other disease reversed the conditions, as in 1579 when there were 3,370 baptisms and 3,406 deaths; while a bad plague year made the deaths preponderate overwhelmingly over the births, as in 1578 when there were 3,150 christenings and 7,830 deaths, or in 1625 when in the city and suburbs 6,983 persons were christened, but 54,265 died.³ During a long period the deaths in London must have much exceeded the

¹ Creighton, *Epidemics in Britain*, I. 471-474.

² *Ibid.*, chaps. vi.-x.

³ *Ibid.*

births, yet the population of the city during the same period was increasing. Obviously this was from the constant flow of outsiders into it; foreign immigrants, English adventurers, restless or evicted, occupationless, and often criminal vagabonds. It was this disproportionate and abnormal growth of London and perhaps of some other large cities and towns, the "infinite increasing greatness of this city", that gave contemporaries the impression that England was teeming and suffering with a superabundance of population.

Bacon in 1606 saw the conditions more fairly and expressed them in a speech in Parliament on the proposed union between England and Scotland:

I must have leave to doubt, Mr. Speaker, that this realm of England is not yet peopled to the full. For certain it is, that the territories of France, Italy, Flanders, and some parts of Germany, do in equal space of ground bear and contain a far greater quantity of people, if they were mustered by the poll. Neither can I see that this kingdom is so much inferior unto those foreign parts in fruitfulness, as it is in population; which makes me conceive we have not our full charge. Besides, I do see manifestly amongst us the badges and tokens rather of scarceness, than of press of people; as drowned grounds, commons, wastes, and the like; which is a plain demonstration, that howsoever there may be an overswelling throng and press of people here about London, which is most in our eye, yet the body of the kingdom is but thin sown with people.¹

The more closely conditions in England in the years just preceding and contemporary with the foundation of Virginia are studied, the more natural does it seem that such a settlement should have been made, that it should have taken some such form as it did and suffered the difficulties it actually experienced. The whole movement was a natural, almost an inevitable one. But this naturalness does not diminish its significance. The grant of the charters to the Virginia Company, the settlement at Jamestown, the propaganda carried on in England in its interest, the activity of the company, the public discussion of the project, the attitude of the king toward it, make the whole movement one of the most important of its time. The subject of colonization was now for the first time, and for all subsequent time, made one of popular interest. In the years between 1606 and 1620 many pamphlets were issued and numerous sermons preached on the subject; appeals for support and statements of plans were made to the general government, to town authorities, to the London companies, to churches, and to individuals; the members of the company were numbered by hundreds, the number of investors large and small rose to thousands; general collections were taken up and lotteries were carried on for its ex-

¹ Spedding, *Letters and Life of Francis Bacon*, III. 312.

penses; it was the subject of discussion in the Privy Council, in Parliament, in the court of aldermen of London, and in the councils of various trading bodies. There must have been few persons in England who took any interest whatever in public questions who failed to become somewhat familiar with the subject of colonization; and all later similar movements were carried on in the light of this familiarity.

The influence of the Virginia project on the political movement of the day was by no means insignificant. It worked itself into the rising conflict between King and Parliament, giving occasion for defining the differences of political views between the royal and the popular party; and the Virginia Company, while falling a victim to the hostility of the former, strengthened and gave unity to the latter.

Lastly, it influenced the literature of the time; not only the literature of voyages and travels, of practical proposals and patriotic or religious appeals, but the higher forms of imaginative writing. Bacon's essay "On Plantations" under its classic terms and general observations scarcely conceals his specific views and criticisms of the Virginia project as it was being carried on. In Drayton's "Ode to the Virginian Voyage" the familiar expressions of the devotees of colonization are put into the service of no mean poetry:

And the ambitious vine
 Crownes with his purple masse
 The cedar reaching hie
 To kisse the skie,
 The cypresse, pine,
 And usefull sassafras.

 Thy voyages attend,
 Industrious Hackluit,
 Whose reading shall inflame
 Men to seeke fame,
 And much commend
 To after-times thy wit.

Three excellent poets joined to immortalize the Virginian captain and the reckless adventurer in *Eastward Hoe*; and the changes are rung on "the Virginian continent", "Virginian priests", "Virginian princes", and "the noblest Virginians" in Chapman's mask played before the king by the gentlemen of the Inns of Court in 1613. The sights and sounds of the sea, the shipwreck, the boasting and roystering, the grace, the charm, and the high imagination of the *Tempest*, and much more that belongs to the literature of that time and of all time, are not without a close connection with the earliest voyages to Jamestown. EDWARD P. CHEYNEY.